

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /099 W

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R 091806Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8397

INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 26331

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: FR, KE, XW, RH, SO, ZA, MZ, NG, ET

SUBJECT: SOME FRENCH VIEWS ON AFRICA

1. SUMMARY: IN A DISCUSSION WITH A QUAI OFFICER ABOUT SOME AFRICAN PROBLEMS HE IS WORKING ON, HE SAID THAT THE FRENCH THOUGHT THE SOMALIS HAD BEEN BLOCKED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO TAKE DIRE DAWA, BUT THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO RETAIN PRIMACY IN TWO THIRDS OF THE OGADEN. DURING GUIRINGAUD'S VISIT TO EAST AFRICA, THE FRENCH WERE STRUCK BY THE DEPTH OF THE KENYAN CONCERN ABOUT SOMALI INTENTIONS TOWARD NORTH KENYA -- AND CORRESPONDING LACK OF EMOTION IN PRESENTING STANDARD VIEWS ON RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. IN ZAMBIA, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOVERNMENT CLEARLY FELT A SENSE OF URGENCY IN RESOLVING THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM, BELIEVING THAT ZAMBIAN INTERNAL STABILITY WAS AT STAKE. THE
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FRENCH FOUND MOZAMBIQUE A VERY PECULIAR BUT INTERESTING PHENOMENON; THEY THOUGHT THAT FRANCE COULD START A DIALOGUE WITH ITS LEADERS. THE FRENCH THOUGHT THAT WESTERN COUNTRIES GOT OFF LIGHTLY AT THE LAGOS CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY SITUATION IN THE OGADEN

QUAI SOURCE READ FROM CABLE FROM ADDIS ABABA (DATED PROBABLY ABOUT SEPTEMBER 5) A REPORT OF THE MILITARY SITUATION AT DIRE DAWA; HE NOTED THAT THIS REPORT WAS IN LINE WITH FRENCH REPORTING FROM DJIBOUTI AND MOGADISCIO. THE ETHIOPIANS HAD INFLICTED SIGNIFICANT LOSSES ON THE SOMALIS IN THE SECOND BATTLE OF DIRE DAWA: ETHIOPIANS RECOVERED 26 SOMALI TANKS, OF WHICH 11 ARE INTACT, AND IMPORTANT QUANTITIES OF LIGHT ARMS AND AMMUNITION. THE FRENCH IN ADDIS ABABA THINK THAT THE SITUATION IS STABILIZED IN THIS AREA FOR THE TIME BEING. THE SOMALIS WILL BE ABLE TO MOUNT RAIDS IN THE AREA, BUT NOT ANOTHER OFFENSIVE TO TAKE DIRE DAWA. THE ETHIOPIAN ARMY WILL NOT, HOWEVER, BE ABLE TO MOUNT A COUNTER OFFENSIVE. THIS WILL LEAVE SOME TWO THIRDS OF THE OGADEN WHICH WILL NOT BE UNDER ETHIOPIAN CONTROL, BUT IT WILL NOT REALLY BE CONTROLLED BY SOMALIA EITHER.

3. KENYAN CONCERN ABOUT SOMALIA
DURING GUIRINGAUD'S TRIP, THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT ECHOED THE ATTACKS ON RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE KENYANS CONSIDERED SOUTH AFRICA RATHER FAR AWAY AND THEIR PARTICULAR CONCERN WAS SOMALI AGGRESSION. THE FRENCH THOUGHT THAT THE SOMALI POPULATION IN KENYA WAS BETTER OFF THAN THAT OF SOMALIA, A FACTOR WHICH WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE SOMALI
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GOVERNMENT TO USE THE POPULATION AGAINST KENYA. THE KENYANS, ON THE OTHER HAND, WERE WORRIED ABOUT A SHIFT IN THE LOYALTIES OF THIS MINORITY POPULATION. AS FOR GUIRINGAUD'S REMARKS CONCERNING SOMALI INTENTIONS, HE SAID ONLY THAT KENYANS HAD EXPRESSED A CONCERN ABOUT THEM.

4. GUIRINGAUD'S ZAMBIAN STOP
SOURCE SAID THAT IT WAS IN LUSAKA THAT THE FRENCH FELT THE STRONGEST CONCERN ABOUT THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM. KAUNDA SEEMED CONCERNED ABOUT THE STABILITY OF HIS OWN GOVERNMENT WHICH DEPENDED ON A RESOLUTION OF THE RHODESIAN QUESTION, BOTH TO PERMIT AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE ECONOMIC SITUATION AND TO SHOW THAT HIS POLICIES HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE. THE FRENCH NOTED THAT SOME OF

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KAUNDA'S REMARKS SEEMED AIMED AT LEFTISTS AS THOUGH
THEY WERE A GROWING OPPOSITION WHICH HE COULD NOW KEEP
PACIFIED, BUT WHICH COULD PUSH INTO POWER IF RHODESIA
AND THE RESULTING PROBLEMS FOR ZAMBIA ARE NOT RESOLVED.

5. MOZAMBIQUE

THE FRENCH FOUND THE TALKS IN MAPUTO PARTICULARLY
INTERESTING WITH SOME OF THE ATMOSPHERE OF AN EASTERN
EUROPEAN COUNTRY. THE REGIME WAS OBVIOUSLY A COLLEGIATE
"PROGRESSIVE" GROUPING AND MACHEL READ A PREPARED TEXT,
WHICH HAD NO DOUBT BEEN PREPARED AND SIGNED OFF BY
THE TOP TEAM. IT WAS A VERY MIXED TEAM, ALSO, WITH
A MIXTURE OF BLACKS, BROWNS, PORTUGUESE, AND EVEN
INCLUDED THE ENGLISH WIFE OF ONE OF THE MINISTERS.
GUIRINGAUD WAS PLEASED THAT HE WAS ABLE TO CONVERSE
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WITH MANY OF THEM IN FRENCH, UNLIKE THE SITUATION
IN THE FORMER BRITISH COLONIES. THE LEADERSHIP WAS
OBVIOUSLY EMBARRASSED BY THE GREAT ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE
ON SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH ONLY SLIGHTLY TEMPERED THE

RHETORIC ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS.

7. LAGOS CONFERENCE

THE FRENCH FOUND THAT THE PRINCIPAL REACTION OF SOME OF THEIR AFRICAN FRIENDS TO THE LAGOS CONFERENCE WAS THAT THE CITY OF LAGOS WAS UNLIVEABLE. MANY WENT AWAY THINKING THEIR OWN CAPITALS WERE NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL. THE FRENCH HAD NOTED THAT GIVEN THE COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT WAS RATHER FAR FROM WHAT WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE PREFERRED. OVERALL, THE WESTERN COUNTRIES DID NOT COME OFF TOO BADLY IN THE CONFERENCE, BUT THE EUROPEANS IN GENERAL THOUGHT THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS A FLOP (FICHU).
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